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C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENNA 000584

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [AF](#) [AU](#)

SUBJECT: AUSTRIAN PLANNING FOR AFGHANISTAN CONTRIBUTION
MOVING SLOWLY

REF: VIENNA 437

Classified By: Econ/Pol Counselor Dean Yap. Reason: 1.4(b) and (d).

[11](#). (C) Austrian MFA Security Policy Director Gerhard Jandl (protect) told E/P Counselor May 14 that the Ministry's efforts to arrange an Austria contribution to Afghanistan stabilization and development efforts were moving slowly, facing both domestic and external obstacles. Jandl noted that defense budget cuts in 2009 and 2010 reinforce Austria's political decision not to deploy military forces to Afghanistan. Deployment of civilian assets to Afghanistan was also seen as politically untenable; any programs involving Austrian personnel would take place outside Afghanistan.

[12](#). (C) The MFA's is focusing on setting up a police training mission that would be associated with -- even if not part of -- the EUPOL mission in Afghanistan. The Ministry would prefer to work with the Nordic countries in their proposed mission, but Jandl said the Nordics had rejected Austrian participation in planning for that mission. As a back-up, the MFA was looking at a Canadian-Indonesian training project in Indonesia. Jandl noted that the Interior Ministry was not enthusiastic about the idea of a mission, which it argues diverts resources from domestic missions, could increase the terrorist threat to Austria, and (if training took place in Austria) lead to embarrassing asylum claims by participants. Jandl also revealed that FonMin Spindelleger was not very keen on pushing the Interior Minister on the matter.

[13](#). (C) MFA hopes for a judicial training program from the Justice Ministry have been dashed. The Ministry has refused to provide any more than a half-day seminar.

[14](#). (C) The final element of the MFA's hoped for package is a pair of agricultural development projects to be run by the Agriculture Ministry -- one on dry-land agriculture and the other on reforestation. MinAg is putting together a project proposal and the MFA is working through the EU to identify PRTs where these projects could take place. However, MinAg is not willing to fund the projects from its own budget and the MFA is not sure of where funds can be found. If realized, this project would involve some short stays by GoA personnel in Afghanistan.

[15](#). (U) The GoA is also proceeding with plans to host a Rand-sponsored conference on good governance in Afghanistan, Jandl said.

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